

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-15 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Hopper. Claims 16 and 17 were also rejected under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over Hopper.

Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Applicant's invention addresses the problem of support for a power line/service line which extends from an external line to a connector that has to be moved towards and away from a cooperative connector within a wellhead. This problem is solved according to an example embodiment of the invention as now more specifically defined in claims 10, 16 and 17 by providing a spool within which the shuttle carrying the connector is movable and on which the service line is wound in a plurality of turns so that the turns are supported on the inside thereof by the spool as the turns relatively expand as the shuttle moves to the extended position.

Hopper discloses in essence two embodiments, one relating to the case of a signal line, that is a line which does not convey any significant electrical power, and the other relating to the case of a power line. In the case of the signal line, as shown in Hopper's Figure 6, the signal line extends from the external connector 36 and in the form of a flexible coil 37 which extends to the shuttle 20 that makes or breaks the connection to the wellhead. The signal line coil is located on the inside of the sleeve within which the shuttle 20 moves. This clearly does not meet the limitations of applicant's claims because according to the invention, the turns are disposed on the spool within which the shuttle reciprocates.

In relation to a power line, Hopper states quite unequivocally, particularly at column 2, lines 6-7, that flexible coils such as used for his signal line embodiment, are not suitable for making electrical connections for power supplies. This is because the

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power lines to a wellhead are required to have a peak rating of tens of kilovolt-amps (kVA) and coils capable of this power rating cannot be both flexible and self-supporting. As a consequence, Hopper provides for a power connection a straight, uncoiled rod-like core 22 which makes a sliding electrical contact with sleeve 21 which has another sliding contact with the connector inside the wellhead.

As is understood from the overview of applicant's invention above, applicant provides a structure which overcomes the problem of support for a power line which extends from an external line to a connector which has to be moved towards and away from a cooperative connector within a wellhead without requiring sliding contacts as taught by Hopper.

As is clear from the foregoing, the invention defined in applicant's claims 10, 16 and 17 differs from Hopper and the structure claimed is unobvious from the teachings of Hopper.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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